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⇝HEBRAICA.⇜

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TWO NESTORIAN RITUAL PRAYERS.

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In the same manuscript from which I furnished **HEBRAICA** with the text of "The Story of Arsânîs" and of "The Narrative of Moses Elect in Prophecy," are two prayers of some interest. An English translation of both is given in Badger's "Nestorians and their Rituals," Vol. II., pp. 280, 281. But his texts must have differed somewhat from those which I have.

The first prayer is the "Prayer said over the Bride when she enters the church forty days after marriage," and the other the "Prayer said over a child and its mother when it enters the church forty days after delivery." Whatever analogy there may be found in Western customs to the first, the second answers to the Anglican and Protestant Episcopal "Churching of Women."

Of the first I have two texts; one in a manuscript comprising the entire Marriage Service of the Nestorians, which I received from Urmî (Oroomia) last year; and this I take as the text to present here, giving in notes the material variants of the text in my other manuscript first above mentioned. My reason for this choice is (chiefly), that in the marriage service this prayer seems to be used of the bride alone, the ceremony being *her* purification, a thing of which the bridegroom, according to many prevalent notions, and the different constitution and functions of the sexes, should stand in no need. But in the first above-mentioned manuscript, the scribe has added words here and there, and placed points ungrammatically, and changed inflexional and suffix terminations (sometimes, apparently, by mistake), so as to give a text which could be read over *either* bridegroom or bride—and that notwithstanding the fact that some of it (at least according to Oriental notions) is wholly inappropriate to the bridegroom.

I have given the important variants of this latter manuscript in foot-notes. If any one will take the trouble to compare Badger's translation, he will see, besides some small matters, that the three are all different in one place; the probability being that Badger's text there omits one word which the other two properly contain, while another word is probably omitted by one of the other texts, and another by the third. The liturgical genius would probably read "that her feet may walk with alacrity in righteousness and holiness," instead of "walk in righteousness and holiness" (Badger), or "walk with alacrity and in righteousness" (Marriage Service MS.), or "walk with alacrity and in holiness" (other MS.). Further, the closing sentence in Badger and the other MS., seem more likely to be the correct text than that in my (possibly reformed) Marriage Service MS.

Of the "churching" prayer, I have only the one text, and think it quite as likely to be correct as that of Badger.

The following is the text of the Prayer over the Bride. The notes give merely variants from the other manuscript. I have not thought it worth while to reproduce the pointing.

ܨܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܬܐܡܪܐ ܥܠ ܟܠܬܐ¹ ܡܢ ܬܬܝܒܠ² ܠܒܝܬܐ ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܐܪܟܒܘܗ̇ ܣܘܣܝ̈ܐ

ܐܘ ܚܢܢܐ ܘܡܬܪܚܡܢܐ ܡܦܝܣܢܐ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ. ܕܠܟ ܟܠ³ ܡܣܟܝܢ ܠܡܘܗܒܬܗ. ܐܦܠ

ܬܬܒܪܟܝ ܘܡܒܘܪܟܝ ܠܗ̇ ܠܟܠܬܐ⁴ ܗܕܐ ܘܩܘܝܡܗ̇⁵ ܒܪ̈ܚܡܝܟ⁶ ܘܐܝܕܗ̇⁷ ܕܬܚܒ ܠܡ̈ܩܒܬܐ

ܘܬܫܬܠܐ ܠܟܢܫܘܬܐ. ܘܬܝܠܕ ܒܢ̈ܝܐ ܕܢܫܒܚܘܢ ܠܟ. ܘܢܗܘܘܢ ܡܢ ܒܗܘܢ ܦܐܪ̈ܐ ܕܚܝܘܬܐ.

ܘܠܐܪܥܗܘܢ ܒܫܡܝܠܘܬܐ ܕܒܬܪ ܡܘܫܝܐ. ܘܡܣܬܒܪܝܢ ܢܗܘܝܢ⁸ ܩܕܡ ܚܬܢܐ.⁹ ܡܢ ܡܟܬܒܢܘܬܗ

ܢܚܡܘܗܝ¹⁰ ܚܟܝܡ. ܘܒܐܘܪܚܗ ܢܗܠܟ ܡܢ ܦܘܩܕܢܗܘܢ.¹¹ ܘܬܘܕܐ¹² ܒܗܘܢ. ܘܒܦܘܩܕܢܗ

ܢܛܠ ܠܟܠܗܘܢ¹³ ܢܪܚܡܬܐ. ܘܒܟܠܗ ܢܚܒ ܠܗ¹⁴ ܒܡܪܐ. ܘܐܝܩܪܗ ܠܟܠܗܝܢ ܒܢ̈ܝܗ.¹⁵

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[1] ܚܬܢܐ ܘܟܠܬܐ

[2] ܢܝܒܠܘܢ̈

[3] Omitted by mistake.

[4] ܚܬܢܐ ܗܕܐ ❖ ܐܘ ܥܠ ܟܠܬܐ

[5] ܩܝܡܝܗ̈

[6] ܒܪܚܡܟ

[7] Omit.

[8] Omitted by mistake.

[9] ܟܠܬܐ ܐܘ ܩܕܡ ܚܬܢܐ

[10] ܢܚܡܘܗ [sic]

[11] ܦܘܩܕܢܘܗ̈ probably the scribe's misreading of an abbreviated suffix.

[12] ܘܬܘܕܗ [sic]

[13] ܟܠܗܘܢ [sic]

[14] ܠܗ̇ [sic]

[15] ܒܢ̈ܝܗ̇ [sic]

ܘܪ̈ܓܠܝܗ̇ ܢܗܠܟܢ ܒܙܪܝܙܘܬܐ ܘܒܦܪܝܫܘܬܐ.[16] ܘܗܘ̈ܝ ܟܠܬܐ ܘܚܬܢܗ̇[17] ܘܫܘܫܒܝܢܗ̇

ܘܫܘܫܒܝܢܬܗ̇[18] ܢܬܢܛܪܘܢ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܠܡܚܒܠܝܢ.[19] [20]ܒܨܠܘܬ ܡܪܬܢ ܡܪܝܡ ܐܡܗ ܕܦܪܘܩܢ

ܘܡܚܝܢܢ ܡܪܢ ܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܒܪܟܐ ܠܗܘܐ ܫܡܗ ܡܢ ܥܠܡ ܘܥܕܡܐ ܠܥܠܡ

TRANSLATION.

(The notes give variant renderings from the other MS.)

The Prayer that is said over the Bride[21] when she enters[22] the church after forty days.

O merciful and compassionate Christ, our God, whose bounty is shed forth towards all, shed forth thy bounty and help towards this bride,[21] and sanctify her in thy mercies,[23] and vouchsafe[24] that she may love good things and hate evil things, and that she may work the works that shall be well pleasing to thee; and that from her bosom may come forth fruits of joys, that may be reared in the faith of the holy church, and that by thy will she may walk before the bridegroom[25] so that she may see him beautiful with her eyes, and may hearken to his commandments with her ears, and acknowledge them, and may speak the truth with her mouth, and love him in sincerity with her heart; and that her hands may do his will, and her feet may walk with alacrity and in righteousness.[26] And may the bride and her bridegroom, and her groomsman and her bridesmaid, be kept from all [things] that harm, [27]by the prayer of our Lady Mary, Mother of our Redeemer and our Saviour, Our Lord Jesus Christ—blessed be his name forever and ever.

Of the second prayer, I give merely the text and translation, as follows:

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[16] ܘܒܩܕܝܫܘܬܐ [18] ܘܫܘܫܒܝܢܐ [19] ܡܚܒ̈ܠܝܢ

[17] ܘܗܘ̈ܝ ܚܬܢܐ ܐܘ ܟܠܬܗ̇ ܘܫܘܫܒܝܢܬܗ̇ [*sic*]

[20] For the rest, substitute ܒܨܠܘܬܗ̇ ܕܝܠܕܬܟ ܫܡܝܐ ܕܬܪܝܢ ܡܪܬܢ ܡܪܝܡ ܡܒܪܟܬܐ ܘܕܟܠܗܘܢ ܩܕ̈ܝܫܝܟ ܗܫܐ ܘܒܟܠܙܒܢ ܘܠܥܠܡ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ ܀ ܘܪܫܘܡ ܥܠ ܪ̈ܫܝܗܘܢ

[21] bridegroom and bride.

[22] they enter.

[23] in mercy.

[24] *Omit* "and vouchsafe."

[25] before the bridegroom, or before the bride. [Other changes, not here noted, make the formula applicable to either bridegroom or bride, but result in a barbarous pointing and text.]

[26] holiness.

[27] For the rest, substitute: "through the prayer of Thy mother, the second heaven, the blessed Lady Mary, and of all Thy saints, now and in every time, and forever and ever. Amen. (*And let him sign* [*the sign of the cross*] *upon their heads.*)"

ܒܘܪܟܬܐ ܕܡܬܐܡܪܐ ܥܠ ܛܠܝܐ ܘܐܡܗ ܡܢ ܕܗ̇ܘܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܐܪܒܥܝܢ ܝܘ̈ܡܝܢ ܒܬܪ
ܡܘܠܕܗ̇ ܀

ܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܐ ܚܝܠܬܢܐ ܒܪܘܝܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ ܘܐܪܥܐ ܘܟܠ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܕܥܒܕܬ ܢܡܘܣܐ
ܠܐܒܗ̈ܬܐ ܩܕܡܝ̈ܐ. ܘܦܩܕܬ ܕܟܠ ܕܟܪܐ ܘܢܩܒܬܐ ܡܢ ܐܪܒܥܝܢ ܝܘ̈ܡܝܢ ܢܐܬܐ ܠܒܝܬܟ
ܩܕܝܫܐ ܇ ܘܢܬܠ ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܠܟܗܢܐ ܕܢܨܠܐ ܥܠܘܗܝ : ܘܢܬܕܟܐ ܇ ܐܢܬ ܡܪܝ ܫܡܠܝܬ ܗܢܐ
ܦܘܩܕܢܐ ܒܡܐܬܝܬܗ ܕܒܪܟ ܚܒܝܒܐ. ܠܗܝܟܠܐ ܟܕ ܗܘܐ ܒܪ ܐܪܒܥܝܢ ܝܘ̈ܡܝܢ. ܟܕ ܫܡܥܘܢ
ܣܒܐ ܩܒܠܗ ܥܠ ܕܪ̈ܥܘܗܝ ܘܐܘܕܝ ܘܫܐܠܗ̇ ܡܢܗ ܫܪܝܐ ܠܚܝ̈ܘܗܝ ܘܐܦ ܗܫܐ ܡܪܝܐ
ܐܠܗܐ ܒܪܟ ܘܩܕܫ ܠܛܠܝܐ ܗܢܐ. ܦܠܢ : ܘܠܐܡܗ ܕܐܬܐ ܠܥܕܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ ܕܐܝܬܝܗ̇ ܒܝܬ
ܡܫܪܝܐ ܕܙܕܝܩܘܬܐ. ܕܢܫܐܠ ܡܢܟ ܕܬܬܠ ܠܗ̇[28] ܕܢܣܓܐ ܚܠܒܐ ܕܡܪܒܝܢܝܬܗ : ܘܢܬܢܛܪ
ܡܢ ܒܝܫܐ ܘܚܝܠܘܬܗ ܘܢܬܪܒܐ ܒܩܕܝܫܘܬܐ ܇ ܘܒܗܝܡܢܘܬܐ ܕܫܪܪܐ ܟܠܗܘܢ ܝܘ̈ܡܬܐ
ܕܚܝ̈ܘܗܝ : ܐܡܝܢ ܀

TRANSLATION.

The Blessing that is said over a Child and his Mother forty days after her giving birth.

Lord God Almighty, Creator of the heaven and the earth and all that in them is, who didst make [it] a law to the fathers of old, and didst command that every one both male and female at forty days old should come to thy holy house and give an offering to the priest, that he should pray over it, and it should be purified; thou, Lord, didst fulfill this command in the coming of thy beloved Son to the temple when he was forty days old, when Simeon the aged received him in his arms, and confessed, and asked of him dismissal from his life. And now also, Lord God, bless and sanctify this child (naming it), and his mother, that [it, the child] has come to the holy church, which is the house, the abode of righteousness, that he may ask of thee that thou wouldst grant to her[29] that milk may abound to his nurse, and that he may be kept from evil[30] and the powers thereof, and may increase in holiness and in the true faith all the days of his life. Amen.

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[28] Most likely a mistake for ܠܗ. The style of the composition requires it, and the text of Badger's translation must have had that reading.

[29] Doubtless the correct reading is "to him." See corresponding note to the Syriac text.

[30] Or possibly, "from the evil one and his powers." But it is not true that the masculine adjective points to a person in Syriac. It is used in the Peshitto, and elsewhere, for the Greek masculine, feminine and neuter, and is the regular word and form for abstract evil.